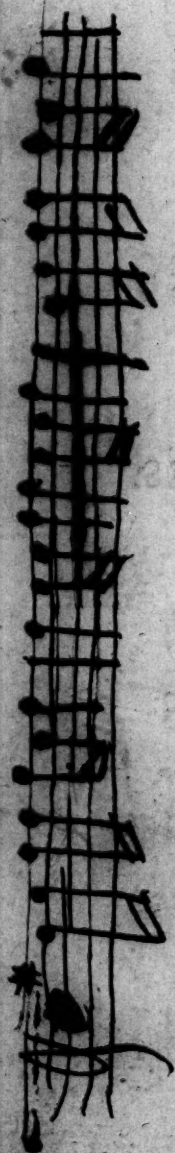


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AN
ESSAY
ON
PARISH WORK-HOUSES.

[Price ~~ONE~~ SHILLING.]



A N
E S S A Y
O N
PARISH WORK-HOUSES:
CONTAINING
O B S E R V A T I O N S
ON THE PRESENT STATE OF
ENGLISH WORK-HOUSES;
WITH SOME
R E G U L A T I O N S
PROPOSED FOR THEIR
I M P R O V E M E N T.

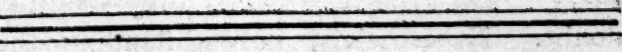
*"Who stops his Ears at the Cry of the Poor,
he also shall cry himself, but shall not be heard."* Prov. 21. 13.

By EDMUND GILLINGWATER,
Overseer of the Poor, at Harleston, Norfolk.

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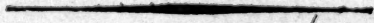


A N

E S S A Y

O N

PARISH WORK-HOUSES.



IT is evident to every one who has but the smallest intercourse with the world, that no complaint is more universal, than the general corruption of manners, which reigns so predominantly amongst the lower class of people, together with the extreme difficulty of reforming them. That this observation

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is founded on truth, is too obvious even to the most cursory observer, to admit of any doubt. Nevertheless, notwithstanding the irregularities of the poor are so universal and notorious, yet a reformation amongst them, though very difficult to accomplish, may not be altogether impracticable.

WHOEVER takes but the most superficial survey of the manner in which our English Work-houses are generally conducted, must necessarily admit, that the almost universal neglect of moral instruction of the poor, is the principal source of those numerous and enormous vices, which are now become both the disgrace and terror of mankind.

As a proof of this assertion, let us but look into our work-houses, for instance, on the Lord's-Day, and see how it is observed.—How seldom shall we find there, that the poor are constantly and regularly brought to attend Divine service. How seldom are they catechised and otherwise instructed in the principles

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principles of christianity. How seldom are they informed of their dependence on their Creator, and their indispensable duty towards him; and how are they suffered to remain totally ignorant of that best of all pious and moral instruction—the holy scriptures? Now, I would only ask any serious and unprejudiced person this single question. What are we to expect from a race of beings so grossly ignorant and untaught in every virtuous principle, when let loose into the world, considered either in a civil or religious light, who all their lives have been under the baneful influence of bad examples, initiated in all the mysteries of iniquity, and have never had the benefit of receiving one moral lesson, or one pious admonition? What therefore are we to expect from such an inhuman, such an unchristian mode of education of the poor, but the most enormous vices and dangerous villainies? Surely, such methods of conducting work-houses must plead very strongly at the bar of impartial justice for the housebreaker, the highwayman, or the murderer, and loud-

ly proclaim that it was more the remissness of their superiors, who were entrusted with the improvement of their morals, than of any moral turpitude in those criminals, that was the primary cause of their unhappy and disgraceful exits.

THE benevolent Marquis Beccaria, says, "The punishment of a crime cannot be just, if the laws have not endeavoured to prevent that crime by the best means which times and circumstances will allow." Now the same mode of reasoning may be applied to the management of our parish work-houses; and I would propose a similar question to every one that is concerned in the superintendence of the poor, Whether the punishment of a crime arising from the want of moral instruction, can be strictly just, notwithstanding it may be legal, when the very persons who apply for justice, have been grossly negligent in administering the necessary means for preventing those crimes, such as have been pronounced by the wisest and
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best of men in all ages, as the most effectual for that purpose?

THE improvement of the morals of the lower class of people, should therefore, not only be the first, but the greatest object to be attempted by those who wish to promote the reformation of the poor. For parish work-houses, as now generally conducted, seldom correct the morals of those who inhabit them; and I am afraid, that the misery, the poverty and distress, which is too often experienced within those wretched abodes, is but a small part of their misfortune, when compared with all that licentiousness and corruption of manners, which ignorance and wickedness can generate.

ANOTHER source of evil which almost universally prevails in the management of our English work-houses, is the great neglect of educating the children.

It is an observation of a very learned and pious writer*. "That some minds are like some soils, the more vigorous and fertile they are, the more capable are they of producing the most luxuriant and pernicious weeds." Now it is evident to every one, that amongst the children of the poor, capacities are to be found of all sizes; and consequently, if those who are possessed of the strongest and liveliest parts, be totally neglected, or their endowments be directed to improper objects, the only difference that will afterwards appear between those of the most brilliant understandings, and those of more ordinary abilities will be, that the former will be more ingeniously wicked than the latter, and consequently a greater plague and terror to mankind. Into the world corrupt as it is, all these children must shortly be sent. How hard therefore must it be for them to be compelled to go, and how inhuman must it be in those who send them, to drive out a race of unfortunate beings, unprincipled in every

* Archbishop Secker.

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every thing that is good, to shift for themselves in a world where so much wrong is to be learnt.

IGNORANCE seems to be the distinguishing characteristic of the English poor, and the principal source of those numerous misfortunes which render them so unhappy to themselves and burthen some to others.* But an enlightened mind, enriched with religious and moral instruction, will not only be productive of much private happiness, but prove the strongest foundation of public security, it being evident to the most common observer, that a person of true goodness of heart, though otherwise perhaps of but moderate attainments, will always make an amiable figure in the world, and prove a valuable member of society.

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* The Scotch, who visit the fairs in Norfolk annually with their cattle, and who are confined to the lowest occupations in life, are so sensible of their superiority over the English poor, in point of education, that they are frequently reproaching us with the ignorance of our lower class of people.

THE most effectual means, therefore, of redressing those evils arising from a want of education amongst the poor, is to begin with the children, and to furnish the tender and uncorrupted mind, with the genuine principles of piety, morality, and industry. Such a mode of educating the poor will be productive of the happiest consequences even now, but will be of unspeakable benefit to the rising generation hereafter. "Religion," says a very ingenious writer*, "I am satisfied has a strong influence in correcting the morals of men; and I am no less persuaded, that it is religion alone which can effectually accomplish so great and so desirable a work."

THE necessity of pursuing this mode of education amongst the children of the poor in our English work-houses, is so evident from the numerous examples held out to us by foreigners abroad, as gives the clearest demonstrations of its usefulness, and the highest

* Henry Fielding.

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highest encouragement to hope for the same success. The many striking instances to be met with in neighbouring nations of their unwearied attention to the religious and moral education of the children of the poor, ought to rouse the people of this land from their unpardonable remissness; and from beholding the happy effects which are there produced, be stimulated to an imitation of their illustrious and benevolent examples.

THE reason given by an eminent writer, † why there are so few prisoners in Scotland, is, “The general sobriety of manners produced by the care, which parents and ministers take to instruct the rising generation.” Government also seems to have been as sensible of the great importance of duly educating the poor, by the following provision
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† Howard in his treatise on prisons. An author of the most unbounded benevolence; and who engaged in the most expensive and arduous undertakings with the most glorious ambition of being a universal friend to mankind. His work affords much amusement as well as useful information, to all those

that is made for that purpose, by an act of William III. 1696. Wherein it is enacted, "That there be a school fettled and established, and a schoolmaster appointed in every parish in Scotland." And the presbytery in Scotland, who have the superintendence of the execution of this act, has given the fullest demonstrations of their sense also of its beneficial effects, by the careful attention which they have always paid to it. Many schools are also founded in this country by private donations and legacies, and by the society for propagating christian knowledge, so that no parish is without a school, and in some, there are four or five. In the southern parts of Scotland it is very rare that you meet with any person that cannot both read and write, and it is scandalous for any person not to be possessed of a bible, which is always read in the parochial schools.

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those who have the care of prisons, and also to those who have the management of parish work-houses, and houses of industry; and has given many useful hints to the author of this Essay, of which he here testifies his grateful acknowledgement.

PARISH WORK-HOUSES. II

THE same author speaking of the prisoners in Holland, says, "Great care is taken to give them moral and religious instruction, and reform their manners, both for their own and the public good."

AT Hamburgh, all the paupers in the poor-house, about 600, are called to prayers every morning; and care is taken that all in the house are properly instructed as to moral and religious duties. The schoolmaster teaches them reading, writing and accounts; a decent behaviour to those who visit the house, and encourage them at proper times, to learn and repeat portions of scripture. They always attend divine service, and behave properly at it. Absence from prayers, and all swearing, cursing, lying, cheating, or quarrelling, is punished by fine or forfeiture, and such as refuse to work, are punished with short allowance or stripes.

IN the great hospital at Warfaw, are to be seen 130 girls, all neat and clean, working at
their

their needles, and finging at the same time an hymn.

IN the orphan-house at Berlin, containing 81 children, they are at school from seven in the morning till nine, and from one to three in the afternoon; from nine to eleven in the morning, and from three to six in the afternoon, they are at work. And at the house of correction at Berlin, where the inhabitants amount to 546, it is customary, after that they are seated at dinner, and a servant had commanded silence, for the school-master to pray at the desk in the middle of the room, and while they were eating to read a part of a chapter in the bible, and sing an hymn.

IN the hospicio at Madrid, fifty of the smallest boys are under instruction at the school, and at six in the morning rise and attend prayers.

IN the several cantons of Switzerland, there are no felon prisoners, and the reason given
for

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for it is this.—The great care that is taken there to give children, even the poorest, a moral and religious education.

MANY other similar instances might be produced if it were necessary, of shewing the great attention paid by foreigners, both Protestants and Papists, to the moral and religious education of the poor, but I presume they would be altogether superfluous, the examples now produced conveying the clearest evidence of the truth of what I have advanced, as the success which has attended them does of their practicableness and utility. And surely the English nation, a people so tenacious of liberty, and so distinguished as it is for its humanity and good sense, will not be the last country on the face of the earth, in dispensing freedom to the poor, and be excelled even by Papists in unriveting those worst of chains, those which enslave the mind, and which render the poor so totally incapable of pursuing such objects as are indisputably

dispensably necessary both for their own happiness and the public welfare.

ANOTHER instance of improper management in our English work-houses, is the general intermixture of all kinds of people. Here we commonly behold the sick and the healthy, the old and the young, the vicious and the virtuous, and also the idle and the industrious, all indiscriminately crowded together, without any distinction being made either to age, merit, or sex, or without any regard being paid to the solicitations of the distressed, or to the remonstrances of many of the tenderest feelings of our nature. The many evil consequences, which must unavoidably ensue from this ill-judged practice, are too obvious to require an explanation, what most principally concern us is to remedy the evil rather than to expatiate too copiously upon its dangerous tendency. To effect this necessary regulation, it is required, that not only the boys and girls should be separated from the adults, but if possible, from each other

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other also, for the unrestrained association of the children with the grown-up poor, is generally one of the principal sources of corruption in our parish work-houses; such a practice is extremely pernicious to the morals of the younger part of the poor, and an irreparable misfortune in having those natural principles of piety, modesty, and morality, which might afterwards have produced the useful husbandman, the ingenious mechanic, and the virtuous matron, poisoned and totally blasted, by the baneful contagion of evil counsels, and corrupt examples. How distressing also must be the situation of the modest, the pious, or the virtuous aged, whom pure misfortune, or the infirmities of nature, have driven to seek for an asylum within these impious walls? How many unfortunate women, trembling perhaps with compunction for their first indiscretion, (for which possibly they are more deserving of pity than punishment) are sentenced by unfeeling parishes to these seminaries of vice, and instead of being reformed and furnished with stronger

stronger motives to sobriety, grow more corrupted and abandoned, and are afterwards sent out into the world, quite hardened and matured in all the mysteries of iniquity, to their own ruin, the further burthen of the public, and the disgrace of society.

ANOTHER evil too prevalent in our English work-houses, is the neglect of industry and proper employment for the poor. It is evident that nothing tends more to enervate the mind, and prepare it for the reception of vice, than the want of being engaged in some honest pursuit, such as duly exercise the powers of our bodies, or those of the higher faculties of our understanding.

THOSE who are entrusted with the principal management of foreign work-houses, are so sensible of the necessity of industry in forming useful members of society, that the most unremitted labours are bestowed both upon adults as well as the younger poor, in order to habituate them to the practice of it; the
good

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good effects of which wise and necessary regulation, they daily experience. For instance, in Holland; where the reason given why there are so few capital offenders in that country is, because the greatest care is taken there to train up the children of the poor, and indeed all others, to habits of industry.—

IN the orphan-house at Milan, there are 300 girls, whose employment is making lace.†

AT the castle at Lisbon there are about 1000 vagrant children employed in a manufactory established there, of spinning, weaving, and making lace, &c.

BESIDES, the admirable house of education at Petersburgh, the noble hospital for children at Vienna, the grand hospital for

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children,

† This employment is of too sedentary a nature to be admitted into our parish work-houses, consistently with the healths of those who engage in it; besides, the continued stooping which it requires may be attended with very dangerous consequences.

children of St. Michael at Rome; the Albergo hospital for children at Genoa; and the house of correction at Milan, containing many boys, and is an improvement of that of St. Michael's at Rome; are all founded upon the plan of useful industry, and moral instruction, and are standing monuments of the admirable wisdom and sound policy of their wise and benevolent founders.

IT is evident from these instances, that the leading principle which actuated these generous friends to mankind, was the happiness of individuals, and the general welfare of society; they being perfectly convinced, that the only means of attaining these desirable ends of all wise and useful institutions, were habits of industry, founded upon the principles of piety and morality. And I make no doubt but that the British nation, so eminently distinguished as it is for its unbounded beneficence, will soon be ambitious of imitating such illustrious examples.

ANOTHER

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ANOTHER source of misery which too commonly disgraces our English work-houses, is the want of cleanliness.

CLEANLINESS is as necessary to the forming virtuous dispositions in the mind, as it is conducive to the health and refreshment of the body. This observation is confirmed by the strict adherence which is paid to it in all the work-houses belonging to foreign nations ; they being sensible, that the neglect of it not only occasions diseases of the body, but tends also to the corruption and debasement of the mind.

FOR instance.—In the noble alms-house at Vienna, containing near 3000 inhabitants, many of whom are 70 or 80 years of age, such admirable order, neatness and cleanliness is observed, that even poverty and old age, appears with a smiling countenance ; and the same regulations are adhered to in many other similar institutions in foreign nations. The necessity and usefulness of cleanliness amongst

such large bodies of people as are generally contained within such narrow limits as a parish work-house, or a house of industry, is so evident, that the directors of some of our larger repositories for the poor, in England, have wisely adopted the plan held out to them by foreigners, and have followed their excellent examples by strictly enjoining cleanliness in their respective habitations for the poor; of which I shall give a few instances.—

AT the house of industry at Parkhurst, near Newport, in the Isle of Wight, for 29 parishes, or the whole island, in 1772, were 215 men and women, and 301 boys and girls; the strictest neatness is observed, and consequently the children are fine and healthy. The same neatness is likewise observed in the houses of industry at Heckingham in Norfolk, and Shipmeadow in Suffolk.

AT Kingston upon Hull, the neatness and cleanliness of the poor-house there, do the gentlemen of that town much credit.

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THE poor-house at Liverpool, which is a large and commodious building, newly erected, does honour to the gentlemen who have the management of it, for their regular and humane attention.

KENDALL, also, in Westmorland, is highly worthy of approbation, for the æconomy, industry, and cleanliness, so conspicuous in every part of the work-house there.

BUT the work-house which principally merits our notice and applause, is at § Mil-denhall in Suffolk. The poor-house for this parish, is situated near the church, and is one of the cleanest that was ever seen. There were lately in this house about 69 persons, whose countenances bespoke their satisfaction, from the attention that was paid to them; and if all our parishes were as careful to promote cleanliness and industry in their own work-houses, as there is observed in this, there would have been no occasion for parishes uniting in houses of industry for a whole

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hundred,

§ See Howard on prisons.

hundred, as has been practised of late years in many parts of Norfolk and Suffolk.

ANOTHER inconvenience attending the general management of our English work-houses, is the want of discipline and good order. For the unrestrained liberty too commonly allowed the poor, both in towns and villages, of rambling about the streets and fields, is not only disgraceful to the community, but productive of innumerable evils. Indolence, and of total corruption of manners, is the fatal consequence of such a mistaken indulgence. Connexions are formed, and correspondencies are opened, which are of the most pernicious nature; whilst the appointed hours for different employments are interrupted, and that necessary regularity and subordination, which ought inviolably to be observed in every institution of this nature, is not only much weakened thereby, but oftentimes totally destroyed.

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ANOTHER instance of bad policy in the management of our English work-houses, is the refusing to admit into them the elder children of such poor, who, though not actually chargeable to the parish to which they belong, yet, through their extreme poverty and inability, are totally unable of introducing them into the world. For if gentlemen would duly consider this point, they would soon perceive, how utterly impossible it is for a man, who is burthened with a large family, even with all the industry and frugality that can be wished for, or expected; and with an uninterrupted enjoyment of health, ever to be able in times like these, when every necessary of life is so very dear, to spare so much money from his labour as is necessary to furnish his children with decent apparel, and such other necessaries, as are required upon their first entrance into the world; not to mention a little education, without which, all other assistance, I am afraid will avail but little. Must it not therefore be good policy in those who super-

intend the management of the poor in their respective parishes, to assist the honest and industrious labourer, oppressed with the weight of a numerous family, with no other support than the produce of his own labour, to assist him under his burthen, by taking some of his elder children off his hands, placing them first in a well regulated work-house, accustoming them to good order and behaviour, habituating them to an early industry, and above all, forming the vacant and untutored mind, and give it such a sense of its duty both to God and man, as may preserve it afterwards from the contagion of vice, render it happy to itself, an ornament to human nature, and a blessing to society.

THE last evil I have to mention, respecting the management of our English work-houses, is the inconsiderate appointment of governors. No complaint is more general in such parishes, where the poor in their work-houses are disorderly, than the want of a governor; at the same time, seldom extending

ing their ideas of that office any farther, than having a rigid, corpulent being, walking through the rooms with a scourge, condemning without hearing, and correcting without mercy; and making no distinction between the idle and refractory, and the infirm and aged; not considering, that the leading principle which should always influence the governor of a parish work-house, is humanity. Correction, therefore, from the governor of a work-house ought never to be inflicted, but with a view to reformation. *Prescind* it but from the prospect of rendering the poor more virtuous, useful and happy; from the noble ambition of returning them again into the world, with better principles, and better designs, than those which they brought into those houses, and the correction degenerates into tyranny, and all the boasted discipline is no better than the most savage barbarity. It frequently happens, that the man who solicits for the government of a work-house, is in such circumstances as render such application necessary

ary for his subsistence, and therefore, possibly may not be very solicitous either for the happiness of the poor or the interest of the parish; a comfortable maintenance being the principal object which he aspired to, having secured that, he beholds with indifference both the miseries of the one, and the injuries of the other, so long as they are compatible with his continuance in his office. These considerations evidently demonstrate, what extreme caution, foresight and discretion, ought to be exercised by those who have the principal management of the poor, in the appointment of a governor in a parish work-house; how dangerous the consequences, if subject to little or no restraint or inspection, but exposed to all the oppressions of an unlimited power. What has been now remarked concerning governors of work-houses, relates to those appointments in general; but there is one case wherein it particularly concerns parishes to proceed with caution in their appointment of a governor, I mean, when they allow this governor the privilege of *farming*

farming the poor. Here opens another avenue to inhumanity, fraud, and oppression; for such a governor of the poor as this, resolves to be recompensed for his additional trouble; emolument is his leading and avowed principle of action, and 'tis either the poor or the parish that must gratify his repacious expectations; and perhaps both. Parishes, therefore in their appointment of a governor of a work-house, with the additional liberty of farming the poor, are only sacrificing their interest to their indolence; and for the sake of avoiding a little extraordinary trouble, are so inhuman as to assign over the poor, to all the miseries and barbarities of an avaricious and unfeeling monster. Interested men ought never to be left to themselves. This is so evident in the higher departments of life, that we have too much reason to apprehend it in stations of a more inferior nature. The property and power which such a governor must necessarily be entrusted with, is too great for one individual, without the closest inspection, lest he should
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be tempted either to secrete the one, or abuse the other. A governor, however, of some kind or other, is generally indispensably necessary, otherwise, all subordination would be destroyed, and a general disorder and confusion would ensue; the difficulty therefore is, to fix upon a mode of government, and to appoint a person who would duly execute it, so as to be tender over the poor, and frugal towards the parish. The most adviseable method of effecting this purpose, is to invest one of the most humane and discreet paupers in the house, with such authority as is sufficient to command due order and regularity; to be careful over the poor and the property of the parish, and the decent management of the house; but to have no fixed salary, as it would incline him to both sloth and idleness; but to be rewarded by a voluntary gratuity from the parish, in proportion to his honesty, diligence, and humanity. In order to establish and preserve these properties in the governor of a parish work-house, it is absolutely necessary, to hold a weekly committee at the house,

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to receive the complaints of the poor, to propose regulations, and to see that the governor does not abuse the trust reposed in him. In those parishes, where committees are not established, an inspector, whom the parish can rely upon, should be appointed to superintend the management of the poor, and see that the governor does his duty §. From what has been observed respecting the appointment of a governor in our parish work-houses, the wisdom of those who have the management of houses for the poor in foreign nations, appears in the strongest point of light it possibly can.— For the impropriety of entrusting the care of such a useful and numerous body of people to the authority of a single individual, with a fixed salary, appeared to those wise guardians of the poor, so extremely dangerous, that
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§ It may be objected here, that an inspector is unnecessary, as the duty of that office ought to be discharged by the overseer; this I allow, but as the latter is only an annual office, overseers may sometimes be chosen, who may not be so diligent as they ought to be in discharging the duties which is required of them by their office.

dom an instance of it is to be met with in the neighbouring nations. There is an instance indeed of the contrary practice at Stockholm, in Sweden, where the governor of the work-house has not only a convenient house to reside in, but a large salary also (for that country) of 50 l. per annum; but the consequence of such an injudicious practice is, as a benevolent writer observes *, “that neither the condition of the house, nor the looks of the poor, do either the governor, or the city the least credit.” In Holland, in Switzerland, and at Hamburgh, the conduct of those who have the management of the poor in those places, is directly opposite to what it is at Stockholm, for instead of submitting the poor to the discretion of a single individual, with a fixed salary, they govern them by regents and inspectors, the latter having the executive part in the management of their work-houses, whilst the former assemble at their respective committees, and amongst other necessary enquiries, see that they do their

* Howard.

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their duty. A mode of governing the poor, something like this which is practised by our neighbours in other countries, might be introduced, I apprehend with success here, in England. The principal inhabitants in our towns and villages might act as regents in a weekly committee, and an inspector might be appointed by them to carry their orders into execution. By acting thus, the necessities of the poor would be duly attended to, the interest of the respective parishes would be secured; and harmony, order and regularity constantly preserved. The more we consider the generous motives which stimulate these benevolent foreigners to undertake the management of their poor, the more we admire them. The salary which is allowed them is so very inconsiderable, that it can offer no temptation to them to engage in conducting the management of the poor, on the side of pecuniary emolument. The noble principle which actuate these generous candidates to solicit a share in the management of the foreign work-houses,

is a sense of honour, a spirit of ambition, a desire of serving their country, together with that personal credit, which must unavoidably ensue from the faithful discharge of any office of this nature. And I make no doubt, but were the happy consequences of thus conducting the foreign work-houses to be universally known in England, that here in our country also, as well as abroad, men might readily be found, who, from a sense of duty, a regard to humanity, and a love for their country, would faithfully, and diligently execute in their respective parishes, these kind offices for the poor, with no other reward, than the applause of their fellow townsmen, the pleasure of relieving the distressed, and the approbation of their own consciences.

Thus, having finished the first part of my design, which was to point out some of the most material inconveniences attending the present general mode of conducting our English work-houses, I now proceed to the
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second part of my plan, which is to propose some remarks and regulations for their improvement.

THE first observation that I have to make respecting a house appropriated for the residence of the paupers belonging to a whole parish is its situation. The situation of a parish work-house should always be upon an eminence. This precaution is essentially necessary not only for the benefit of a free and copious admission of fresh and wholesome air, so conducive to the health and refreshment of its inhabitants, but so extremely useful also in carrying off that accumulation of noxious effluvia, which is continually evaporating from the pores of large bodies of people, confined within the narrow boundaries of a parish work-house || ; which would otherwise stagnate, and be productive of the most
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|| In order to ascertain with greater exactness that temperature of the air in the common working-room of a parish work-house, a thermometer hung therein will be found useful.

pernicious consequences *. The foil on which a parish work-house is intended to be built, should always be a dry one, as most conducive

* Dr. Priestly has proved by experiments, that confined air, becomes not only unfit for respiration, but even poisonous. What therefore Dr. Aikin says of hospitals, may be applied to parish workhouses, That whoever surveys the languid countenances of the paupers; when he feels the peculiarly noisome effluvia, so unfriendly to every vigorous principle of life, and compares their transient effect upon him, with that to be expected by those who are constantly breathing them, and imbibing them at every pore; he will be apt to look upon those work-houses as so many dismal prisons, where the unfortunate are shut up from the rest of mankind, to perish by mutual contagion.

The sudden and fatal effects of noxious vapours have generally been supposed to be principally, if not wholly, owing to the loss and waste of the *vivifying spirit of the air*. But Dr. Hales attributes this effect to the loss of a considerable part of the *air's elasticity*, and to the grossness and density of the vapours with which the air is changed. This he proved by the following experiment made on himself: He found that the lungs would not rise and dilate as usual when they draw in such noxious air, the elasticity of which has been considerably diminished. For having made a bladder very supple by wetting it, and then cutting off so much of the neck as would make a hole wide enough to admit the biggest end of a large fossét, to which the bladder was bound; and then having blown the bladder, he put the small end of the fossét into his mouth, and, at the same time pinched his nostrils so close, that no air might pass that way, and he could only breathe to and fro, the air contained in the bladder, which, with the fossét contained 74 cubic inches: In less than half a minute, he found a considerable difficulty in breathing; and at the end of a minute, the bladder was become so flaccid, that he could not blow it above half full, with the greatest expiration which he could make; and,

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conducive to the health as well as cleanliness of its inhabitants. A proper supply of water must not be far distant, and if conti-

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at the same time, he could plainly perceive that his lungs were much fallen, in the same manner as when we breathe out of them all the air we can at once. Hence he concluded, that a considerable quantity of elasticity of the air was destroyed, and that when the suffocating quality of the air was the greatest, it was with much difficulty that he could dilate his lungs in a very small degree. From this, and several other experiments, he inferred, that the life of animals is preserved rather by the elastic force of the air acting on their lungs, than by its vivifying spirit; and that candles and matches cease to burn, after having been confined in a small quantity of air; not because they have rendered the air effete, by consuming its vivifying spirit, but because they have discharged a great quantity of acid, fuliginous vapours, which partly destroy its elasticity, and retard the elastic motion of the remainder. This acid air has a very strong affinity with phlogiston. Dr. Priestly, therefore, has shewn from a number of experiments, that the air is a menstruum for the phlogiston emitted by burning bodies; which must cease to burn, when that menstruum is saturated with it. And he accounts in the same manner for the suffocation of animals in a confined space. When the phlogiston, emitted by burning bodies, and breathing animals, can no longer be absorbed by the ambient air, both life and flame are extinguished. When a body of air is so confined that the elasticity of it is destroyed by a redundancy of the phlogiston, it proves fatal; as was the case in the black-hole at Calcutta: And in all hospitals, prisons, and work-houses, where the air is oftentimes too much confined, it increases the phlogiston, and diseases and death are the unavoidable consequences; for many of the diseases peculiar to parish work-houses, are occasioned more from the exclusion of fresh and wholesome air, than from the number of their inhabitants.

guous to a stream, will be still more convenient, provided the house be not subject to unwholesome air, arising from inundations. A south-east aspect, if possible, is the most desirable; and marshes, and all low grounds should be carefully avoided.

RESPECTING the form of the building, that of an half of a Roman H, appears the most eligible; as it affords a commanding prospect of the whole structure; a view of every proceeding transacted in the area; and consequently, a perfect acquaintance with those pernicious intercourses too often carried on between the paupers and their adjoining neighbours †. The house should be of considerable height, that the rooms may be lofty, nothing being more necessary for the health and refreshment of its inhabitants,

† I am aware that an objection may be made against this mode of construction, by alledging, that in a quadrangular form, an effectual ventilation is prevented, and a pool of stagnating, tainted air is collected in the area, which is continually re-entering the rooms through the windows which look into it. This objection I allow to be true in hospitals, but not in work-houses, the number of inhabitants being too small to occasion this danger.

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tants than lofty ceilings ; for when the breaths and perspirations of large bodies of people are constantly repelled upon them again, and confined within narrow spaces, they were attended with very dangerous consequences. The windows also in these buildings should be placed opposite to each other, on the different sides of the house ; each window should have a casement, which should always be set open, whenever the weather permits, to promote as much as possible, that free circulation of air through every part of the house, so essentially necessary for the health and comfortable accommodation of the paupers †. Exclusive of the common offices usual in these buildings (which should always be conveniently situated, and well adapted to the purposes assigned them) there ought always to be in every well regulated work-house, a decent room appropriated to

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† There is a singular instance of the impropriety of excluding a free circulation of air from buildings of this nature, at Framlingham, in Suffolk ; where the work-house belonging to that large parish, is erected within the lofty walls of the castle, which every where closely surround it.

the accommodation of the regents, or weekly committees. Those regular meetings being extremely necessary and useful, both for the consideration of all applications made to the parish; hearing the complaints of the poor; and redressing their grievances, as well as attending to the due regulation and internal police of the house. There should be also in every parish work-house, a convenient room, separate from the common rooms of the house, reserved for the reception and comfortable accommodation of the aged poor, where they should be supplied with every necessary of life, and suffered to close the evening of their days in undisturbed tranquillity. Another room also should be allotted for infants, and such children as are too young to be employed. A proper room must always be reserved for the necessary confinement of idiots and lunatics; the melancholy spectacles which they commonly exhibit, being too painful for the tender feelings of humanity to behold, as the exposing them to public shew, is most extremely disgraceful

PARISH WORK-HOUSES. 39

ful and barbarous. If a proper room also in the house was allotted for a school, to teach the children at convenient times to read, and to be used likewise for the holy offices of religion, it would answer a very useful purpose. In dividing the rooms in the house, and appropriating them to the accommodation and necessary uses of the paupers, it is necessary that the principal work-rooms should be on the opposite sides of the building, in order that the adults may be kept separate from the children; there being but few defects in our common work-houses, which tend more to corrupt the morals of the younger part of the poor, than the general intermixture of adults and children: to be always exposed to the sight of bad examples, and made familiar with profaneness and vulgar rudeness, will blast the tender buddings of virtue, and initiate the unsuspecting mind into every mystery of iniquity. It is also the *interest* of every parish to attend to this precaution: for it is well known, that the grown-up inhabitants of these places

are generally the slothful and idle, such as will do no more work than they are absolutely compelled to perform, and are full of contrivances to excuse themselves from labour. Their precepts and examples cannot fail of having a very mischievous effect upon the children who associate with them. The same observation is applicable to many other vices too commonly practised in parish work-houses. On this account, therefore, it may not be altogether unadvisable, not only to separate the children from the adults, but also, if it be possible, the children of different sexes from each other || : the want of these regulations is the principal reason, I apprehend, why so few good and industrious servants, and other useful members of society, come out of our English work-houses. The last circumstance which I shall mention relative to the construction of a parish work-house, is, the appointment of a room for an infirmary.

|| These precautions may not be altogether practicable in many of our parish work-houses, but in our houses of industry I wonder they are not more attended to.

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infirmary: For many diseases peculiar to these institutions might be prevented, or at least much retarded, if a proper room was provided into which the sick might be removed upon the first appearance of any dangerous disorder; it being highly improper, when a pauper is attacked with a violent fever, or other contagious disorder, to suffer him to sleep in the same apartment as the healthy, and to associate with the family in common. The most fatal consequences may be apprehended from a careless inattention to this precaution, as not only the healths but even the lives of the inhabitants of these houses must unavoidably be endangered thereby.

HAVING now considered with much attention the situation and also the construction of a parish work-house, I shall now proceed to propose such regulations as are necessary for the proper management thereof.

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THE first material point to be duly attended to in all institutions of this nature, is the establishment of respectable authority, and a punctual obedience to the same. For without the observance of proper subordination, the orders will be received with indifference, and obeyed with negligence. The inspector will sink into contempt, and the poor into riot and confusion. Industry will be supplanted by idleness, and wickedness will usurp the prerogative of virtue. Consequently, a strict, but humane discipline, must be firmly adhered to, it being the grand preservative of the peace and good order of the house, the happiness of the poor, and the interest of the parish. All quarrelling, fighting, and abusive language, should not only be forbidden, but punished, especially if persisted in. Indolence, (that great evil of the poor) should never be indulged or connived at, but their stated hours of working be always observed, and their reasonably appointed stints as constantly demanded; no exemptions should be admitted without real necessity, nor frivolous

PARISH WORK-HOUSES. 43

lous excuses plead for absolute idleness.— Nevertheless, this strict and exact discipline, however necessary both for the paupers and the parish, must never degenerate into rigid and partial severity; and consequently, those inspectors whose office obliges them to correct the misdemeanors of the poor, should never lose sight of humanity; always remembering, that the poor with all their failings, have innumerable claims to our compassion; and that, while we are chastising them as criminals, must never forget that they are fellow-beings and christians §.— For the poor, under mild and proper government, are far from being that rude and disorderly part of society they are generally supposed to be; many a generous spirit is to be met with, even in these lowest departments of human life; many a noble and ingenuous mind, which, with due cultivation, would have filled with reputation some distinguished character

§ Here we should follow the humane directions of the benevolent Howard; “ To imitate our gracious heavenly parent, who is kind even to the *unthankful* and to the evil.”

character in the world *. The government therefore, which is established in our English work-houses, like that in similar institutions for the poor in foreign nations, should always be lenient and gentle; never severe but in cases of absolute necessity, such as reclaiming the disorderly, and the support of due order and subordination: evincing thereby, that the happiness of the poor, and not the wanton exercise of authority, is the only object aimed at in inflicting punishments.

ANOTHER

* But knowledge to their eyes her ample page,
 Rich with the spoils of time did ne'er unroll;
 Chill penury repress'd their noble rage,
 And froze the genial current of the soul.
 Full many a gem of purest ray serene,
 The dark unfathom'd caves of ocean bear;
 Full many a flower is born to blush unseen,
 And waste its sweetness on the desert air.
 Some village Hampden, that with dauntless breast,
 The little tyrant of his fields withstood;
 Some mute inglorious Milton here may rest,
 Some Cromwell guiltless of his country's blood.
 Far from the madding crowd's ignoble strife
 Their sober wishes never learnt to stray;
 Along the cool sequester'd vale of life,
 They kept the noiseless tenor of their way.

GRAY.

PARISH WORK-HOUSES. 45

ANOTHER regulation necessary to be observed in our parish work-houses, is the punctual observance of religious duties. This is the fundamental basis, on which must be erected the important superstructure of a useful and rising generation. The Lord's day must be carefully observed. The public service of the church duly attended, not only by the younger paupers, but by the elder ones also, if they are able. The children should be catechised on that day, if not oftener; and the duties of christianity, as well as articles of faith, explained to them in such an easy and familiar manner, as is suitable to their comprehensions. The holy scriptures should also be read to them. And prayers morning and evening should never be omitted, on that day at least; to which, all in the house should be summoned by a bell to attend; none to be excused therefrom but through leave of absence, or real necessity. If the same regulation was observed on the mornings and evenings of week-days also, it would be attended with the happiest effects; for

for the constant and regular observance of religious duties would make such powerful impressions on the minds of the younger poor, as probably would never afterwards be wholly effaced. It would teach them what many of the grown-up poor seem almost totally ignorant of, viz: The being of a God, and their dependence upon him. Grace, also, before and after meals, should never be omitted. From the corruption of the age, the first introduction of these duties may perhaps seem a little awkward, and the performance of them rather irksome; but the constant practice of them will soon make them familiar, and from their good effects, they will learn to like them; and when once they have conceived a good opinion of them, they will always be accompanied with a proper weight and influence. If all our English work-houses, therefore, instead of echoing with profaneness and blasphemy, were, like the work-houses in foreign parts, to resound with the offices of religious worship, it might be the happy means of awakening many, perhaps
thousands,

PARISH WORK-HOUSES. 47

thousands, to a sense of their duty both to God and man†. For it was a just observation made by a worthy Dutch magistrate, "I have known," says he, "persons who have come out of our houses thoroughly reformed, and have afterwards thanked God for their having been in them †."

To the foregoing regulations respecting religion, we may subjoin the following directions concerning morality, for they are such useful companions that they ought never to be separated. The system of morality that must here be recommended is that of the sacred writings; no other system is comparable to it; all the maxims of morality which adorn the writings of the heathen philosophers,

† See Howard on Prisons.

† Some of the good effects arising from the religious education of poor children, have been lately experienced in the work-house belonging to the parish of Harleston, Norfolk. The difficulty attending putting out town children to service had been much complained of there, and the masters to whom they were sent, generally received them with reluctance: But from the regulations lately introduced into that house, applications are frequently made to the overseer, for servants, by reputable families, so that but few children are now in that house fit for service.

phers, and have excited the esteem and admiration of succeeding generations, fall infinitely short of it, and have resigned their pretensions to its superior excellency. In consequence of introducing this admirable system into our parish work-houses ||, all swearing, lying, cheating, stealing, drunkenness, and every species of rudeness and indecency, must not only be strictly forbidden, but severely punished, especially after the first offence. The minds of the younger poor should be duly attended to; the seeds of piety and morality early implanted therein, and the tender beginnings of goodness, cherished, and carefully cultivated, before they are blasted by the contagion of evil counsel, or the corruption of bad examples, too generally prevailing amongst the grown-up part of the poor*. It is much easier to prevent evils than to cure them :

|| By causing little portions of the holy scriptures, judiciously selected, to be read in the house daily.

* This will have an excellent effect on the poor; the novelty of it will excite the attention of the younger part, and make such impressions as will never be effaced; and the grown-up poor may thereby be restrained from becoming more corrupt.

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them: So also it is far less trouble to form the minds of the younger poor to habits of piety, morality, and industry notwithstanding it may be attended with much labour and inconvenience; than, after they have been suffered to remain ignorant of every virtuous principle, and habits of impiety, idleness, and debauchery have interwoven heir destructive fibres into the most secret recesses of the heart, to irradicate them again, and establish the contrary virtues. By a careful attention to moral instruction much may be done in reforming the poor. Few of the poor are incorrigible, many of them are well disposed, and those that are not so, may be softened into amendment by good advice, and gentle treatment, accompanied with suitable rewards and encouragements; few minds being so wholly sunk in ingratitude, as to be capable of withstanding the almost irresistible force of repeated kind offices. The morals, therefore, of the poor in our parish work-houses, especially those of the children, should be particularly attended to. A kind

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and tender monitor † should often visit them : should watch the opening mind and infuse with affability the instructive lessons of morality ; and without tiring their attention, converse with them as a parent or a friend §. In the prosecution of this undertaking, great allowances must be made for the perverseness, the imperfection, and the corruption of human nature ; ever averse to what is good, and truly beneficial, both to individuals and society in general : otherwise, those who embark in the arduous employment, will be discouraged by difficulties, and driven from the pursuit by the apprehension of insurmountable obstacles : but these are cowardly suggestions ; let them form a plan with due deliberation, and resolve to execute it with constancy and uniformity : and their firmness will overcome every impediment ; their perseverance will render it easy, and the happy effects of it will abundantly repay their trouble.

ANOTHER

† Howard.

§ Delightful task ! To rear the tender plant ;
To teach the young idea how to shoot ;
And pour the fresh instruction o'er the mind.

THOMSON.

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ANOTHER regulation which must be strictly adhered to in the proper management of our parish work-houses, is industry; for indolence is the offspring of vice, and the bane of every virtue. Every individual of society has his respective employment for the good of the whole. No one is exempted from contributing his share of labour to the general stock. And those whose superior situations in life discharge them from manual occupations, are called upon to exercise the no less necessary and wearisome employment of the mind. How peculiarly erroneous therefore must it be in those who occupy the lower departments of society, to imagine, that they are to be excused from labour; and that those are to be permitted to remain idle, who subsist on the industry of others. In all our parish work-houses it is consequently necessary, that some manufactory should be established, and a regular course of employment strictly adhered to and pursued. Reasonable stints should be allotted to each individual, and none be suffered to remain

indolent that are capable of working. Their earnings should be applied to the general expenditure of the house, after some little portion is deducted, to be distributed amongst the industrious as an encouragement to future diligence. Those paupers, whose industry inclines to work extra hours for their own benefit, should not be denied the privilege ||. Nevertheless, industry, necessary as it is in a parish work-house, must never be considered in such a pecuniary light as to be regarded as the principal object of the employment of the poor; emolument being but a secondary consideration in these institutions; the primary one is to make the poor better; more happy to themselves and useful to others, both when they form a part of those establishments, and when they mix again in common with other members of society. Parish work-houses, in reality, are only legal receptacles for the aged and unfortunate, and seminaries for the virtuous education of that part of the rising generation, who are desti-

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|| Howard on prisons,

PARISH WORK-HOUSES. 53

tute of either friends or relations, and are totally unprovided for. Labour, therefore, must not be so rigorously exacted of the poor, as not to allow the children reasonable time for education *, and the aged, such necessary intervals, as are required for more important exercises, than those which relate to this world.

FROM considering the above rules, we shall now direct our attention to the observance of another regulation very necessary to be observed in all parish work-houses, which is, the education of the children. A most material consideration indeed! Not only the happiness of the poor, but the welfare of society in general are highly interested therein: The peace and security of the public at large, depending chiefly upon it. For if all the youth brought up in our parish work-houses, were first duly instructed in the general principles

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* It is with singular pleasure that I behold the reform now in agitation, respecting the charity schools in Norwich, under the direction of the Bishop, the Dean, and other respectable persons in that city, where reading and industry are united.

of true christian piety and morality, and afterwards in the common forms of education, both usual and necessary at the first introduction into life, we should seldom hear of such banditties of thieves and murderers, house-breakers and swindlers, which are such a reproach to the police of the British nation; such as continually alarm it with fears, and disgrace it with such frequent and horrible executions. The ignorance and licentiousness, which are now suffered to remain amongst the poor, have made the lower class of people by their unparalleled depredations on the public, not only a reproach, but so many scourges to their superiors, to chastise them for their unpardonable remissness, in point of virtuous and useful education of the children of the poor. It is therefore the interest of the public to provide for the proper education of our poor. And if interest pleads so loudly in their behalf, humanity pleads still louder: For human nature is always the same, and the difference between one man and another is but trifling. It consists chiefly in the mere
external

PARISH WORK-HOUSES. 55

externals of life, the more essential ones being common to all. There are the same passions to be gratified among the poor, as amongst those in superior stations of life: The same spirit of resentment when they are oppressed, and the same relish of kind offices conferred upon them, in the one as in the other. It must surely, therefore, be the interest of the public, as well as the suggestion of humanity, that should stimulate those of exalted stations to be watchful over so large and useful a part of mankind, and, convince them by a virtuous and useful education, that they are anxious for their future happiness in life; and that they were designed both by God and man for some higher rank in the scale of rational beings, than merely as so many shovels to cast up dirt.

RESPECTING the mode of educating the children in our parish work-houses, it may be most adviseable perhaps, especially where the communities are large, to have a regular schoolmaster in the house, in order to teach

the children reading, writing, and the common rules of arithmetic: to instruct them in the catechism; the principles of piety and morality; to assemble them at the usual times of prayer; and to acquaint them with a knowledge of the holy scriptures *. In those places where the houses are too small to admit of this useful regulation in its fullest latitude, a suitable person may be selected from amongst the elder paupers of the house, that is qualified to instruct the children in the catechism; teach them to read, and oblige them to say grace at their meals, allowing such persons a reasonable gratuity for their trouble;

* I am aware that an objection may be started against this mode of educating the children of the poor, by alledging, that learning is prejudicial to the lower class of people, causing them to be unhappy to themselves, and troublesome to their superiors: But this is an objection not only illiberal in itself, but what is more extraordinary, frequently advanced by those, who, in other respects, are perfect enthusiasts for the liberties of mankind, both religious and civil. The natural rights of men should never be withheld or violated. And I apprehend, there is no more danger of a virtuous, sensible, and enlightened pauper, being either a useless or turbulent member of society, than there is of a regular and well-disciplined soldier raising a mutiny, and conspiring against his commander.

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trouble, in proportion to the industry they shall exercise in discharging their office †.

THE last regulation I have to propose respecting the proper management of a parish work-house, is cleanliness. Not any thing contributes more to the health and comfortable accommodation of the poor, than the observance of it; nor is any thing more productive

† Before I close my observations relative to the virtuous and useful education of the children of the poor, I cannot suffer to pass over unnoticed, the excellent institutions lately established in Gloucestershire, and other parts of this kingdom, called "Sunday schools." The original founder of these schools was one Mr. Raikes, a printer, in the city of Gloucester. This humane gentleman having observed great numbers of poor children in that city, spending their Sundays in an idle and dissolute manner, established these benevolent and useful institutions for their instruction on that day, which, by his attention, and liberal encouragement, have had a happy effect in improving the morals of the younger classes of the poor; many of whom now look up to their kind benefactor with great esteem and affection. These schools have been lately introduced into this county; and four of them are established in the town of Harleston, whereby upwards of one hundred poor children in that parish, are in a constant and regular course of instruction, in the principles of the christian religion; which it is hoped, will afterwards produce much happiness to individuals, and benefit to the public in general. Such parishes as may be desirous of introducing these institutions, are referred to Mr. Raikes's letter, in *Genl. Mag.* June, 1734.

ductive of diseases, both of body and mind, than the neglect of it: Foreigners, in their institutions for the poor, are so sensible of its necessity and usefulness, that the strictest observance of it is demanded, and as punctually attended to in all the best regulated work-houses in the neighbouring nations. In order that this regulation should be carried into execution, every parish work-house should be thoroughly lime-washed twice every year at least, and the work-rooms and other rooms of general resort for the whole house, quarterly; especially in the summer half year. Every room in the house must be washed once a week, and oftener if necessity requires it†. All the windows should be properly glazed, and kept clean; and the chimneys swept when necessary. No hogs, dogs, or fowls, ever suffered to be kept; and all the drains, sewers, and vaults, to be often washed

† See some good reasons given by Howard, in his treatise on prisons, why washing of rooms is not prejudicial to the healths of those who constantly live in them. An assertion supported by some eminent gentlemen of the faculty, notwithstanding the general prejudice inclines many people to think the contrary.

PARISH WORK-HOUSES. 59

washed and kept clean; and no offensive dunghills be permitted to remain near the house; the children's hair should be frequently cut and kept short; their heads often combed and kept clean; their face and hands never suffered to continue dirty, especially at meals; and they should always be obliged to wash them every morning before they begin their respective employments; for which purpose, a towel on a roller hung near a basin of water, should be part of the fixtures in all parish work-houses. All the utensils belonging to the house, should be frequently scoured and kept very clean, especially those that are connected with the diet. Fumigations also, either of vinegar or brimstone may be sometimes necessary, as when the weather is very sultry, the house crowded, or infected with contagious disorders §. The linen likewise should be duly attended to,

§ The use of fumigations under the above circumstances, is too well known to require much explanation. Dr. Hales tells us, that the air, which passes through cloths dipped with vinegar, can be breathed to and fro as long again as the like quantity of air, which is not thus purified. This may be proved, I apprehend, in the foregoing experiment of the bladder, by Dr. Hales.

to, and a change of clean linen allowed every week, particularly in the summer season. The beds also should be kept clean and decent, and in good repair: They should be made and well stirred every day; and all the lodging rooms at the same time well swept, and the casements set open: and after the decease of a pauper, the beds that have been used by them should be brought out of the house, and well aired, especially if the disorder has been of an infectious nature. A punctual adherence to the several parts of the above regulation, will be found, I apprehend, not only conducive to the health, but in every respect to the happiness of the poor, residing in our parish work-houses.

THE food eaten in these receptacles of the poor, should always be good in its kind, properly cooked, distributed in just proportions, and at proper seasons for meals.

THE apparel should be decent, always clean; and oftentimes baked either to destroy, or to prevent the breeding of vermin.

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PARISH WORK-HOUSES. 61

THE admission of fresh air should always be carefully attended to; for not only the healths but the lives of the paupers may depend greatly upon it: consequently, the windows both in the lodging-rooms, and work-rooms, should never be suffered to remain shut, when the weather will permit them to be open.

THE furniture also in these houses, though not expensive, yet should always be decent. The general mode of filling work-houses with ordinary, broken lumber, is displeasing to the poor, and disgraceful to parishes; it burdens too much upon dirt and filthiness; and gives the rising generation a mean and mistaken idea of that decency and neatness, which is necessary to be observed in every reputable and well-regulated family.

THUS, I have finished what I originally intended, at the beginning of this essay: namely, to offer some remarks on the present ill-conducted management of our English work-

work-houses in general, and to propose some regulations for their improvement ||. How far I have succeeded in these attempts, I must leave to the impartial voice of candour and humanity to determine. What I chiefly request of the public, as an obscure individual is, that the distresses of the poor, the interests of parishes, and the general welfare of society, may, in some measure, plead for my presumption: and whilst I am condemned for an assuming vanity in prescribing, may be acquitted, I hope, for the uprightness of an honest intention. I am persuaded, that from the

|| Perhaps it may be objected to the introducing of the above regulations into our parish work-houses, that they may thereby be rendered such desirable places, that the poor will be more solicitous of inhabiting them, than of endeavouring to keep from them. To which I answer, that it should always be remembered that there are two sorts of paupers, the one sober and industrious, the other lazy and idle: The former never wanting to have their residence in these houses but when necessity compels them; and when they are there will be no great burthens to the parish: the latter, however desirous they may be of coming into these houses, will always be deterred from attempting it; the necessity of conforming to the rules of piety, industry, and regularity, will be such insurmountable obstacles to encounter with, that they will never be able to overcome them: and consequently, a house farmed on the above plan, will offer no invitations to the idle and disorderly poor.

PARISH WORK-HOUSES. 63

the want of a constant and vigilant adherence to regulations, similar to those abovementioned, is the cause which has given rise to our houses of industry; as I apprehend there is but a little doubt, but that if all our parishes had been careful to inculcate the principles of piety, morality, industry and regularity, in their respective work-houses, a house of industry would scarcely have been known or thought of. A house of industry, how paradoxical soever it may appear, is entirely the offspring of indolence; it being through the inattention and supineness of the principal directors of the poor in their respective parishes, which gave birth to them; and so long as the same disposition continues, these houses are rendered excellent institutions as substitutes for remissness and inactivity. Nevertheless, I do not despair but that the time will arrive, when an attention to the happiness of the poor and the welfare of the public, will display itself in this country, equal to what it does in foreign nations; and that generous spirits will arise amongst
us,

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us, who, from a sense of duty, the feelings of humanity, and the love of their country, will undertake these kind offices for the poor; looking for no other reward, than the approbation of their own minds, arising from the pleasure of having made others happy.

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THE END.